

The result of births less deaths within a given area is the "natural increase" of that area. (This combination can result in a decrease in population, but it is rare for a community to have more deaths than births.) Causes of migration are more variable. If ample employment and housing are available, people will remain in the general area or move in. If local opportunity for work, together with housing for those who would move in, is not available, some must relocate to find these. Other things must be considered too -- such as military service, neighboring industrial centers, etc., that may cause the young workers and their families to leave.

Table 2 shows the migration trend between 1950 and 1960 for Maiden and Catawba County. Both Maiden and the county experienced outmigration, with that for Maiden being at a much higher percentage than the percentage experienced by the county.

Further indication of this outmigration is given in Table 3, the age and sex listing of the Maiden population in 1950 and 1960. By age group it is noted that in spite of a population increase, the town had less people in the 15 through 34 age brackets in 1960 than in 1950. This trend toward fewer young people was true in both the male and female groups, and in the female group of under five years -- indicating that young families were leaving. This trend is significant in that the median age (halfway point) of the population is growing older. For example, half of the population was 28.5 or under. This in itself is not alarming, but it becomes obvious that should such a trend continue from decade to decade the loss of these younger people could have a marked effect on the overall picture in terms of available labor, retail consumption, etc.\*

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\*Note: For comparison, the median age for North Carolina in 1960 was 24.2 years, the median age for Catawba County was 26.3 years.